

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: E12-121

OUTCOME 0: Whole of Portfolio

Topic: Travel Costs

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 3

Senator: Senator McKenzie

Question:

- a) For the financial year to date, please detail all travel for Departmental officers that accompanied the Minister and/or Parliamentary Secretary on their travel. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals).
- b) For the financial year to date, please detail all travel for Departmental officers. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals).
- c) Are the Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel (Finance Circular No. 2009/11) guidelines being followed? How is this monitored? If the guidelines are not being followed, please explain why.
- d) Are lounge memberships provided to any employees? If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the total costs of the lounge memberships.
- e) When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travel with them? If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.

Answer:

- a) Please refer to Table A for a summary of travel and related costs for the reporting period. Please note that it is not possible to individually report on all the separate items requested in the question as costs are met by individual travelers from domestic travelling allowances paid as a daily rate. All flights are booked in economy class. All travel taken was to accompany the Portfolio Ministers to meetings or events in order to undertake portfolio related business.

Table A:

1 July 2011 to 14 Dec 2011						14 Dec 2011 to 31 May 2012					
Minister/ Parliamentary Secretary	Total (incl. GST)	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses	Minister/ Parliamentary Secretary	Total (incl. GST)	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses
Minister for Health & Ageing ¹	Nil					Minister for Health ²	Nil				
1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012											
Minister/ Parliamentary Secretary	Total (incl. GST)	Flights	Travel Allowance	Accommodation	Additional Expenses						
Minister for Mental Health & Ageing	Nil										
Minister for Indigenous Health	\$6,407.39	\$4,748.44	\$805.70	\$734.00	\$119.69						
Parliamentary Secretary for Health & Ageing	Nil										

b) Please refer to Table B for a summary of travel and related costs for the Department of Health and Ageing during the period 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012.

Table B:

	Domestic 2011-12 YTD May '12 \$	International 2011-12 YTD May '12 \$
Travel Expenditure		
First Class airfares	\$0	\$182,362
Business Class airfares	\$2,862,159	\$1,033,952
Economy airfares	\$4,445,157	\$617,226
Sub total – Airfares	\$7,307,316	\$1,833,540
Travel Allowance (meals & incidentals)	1,692,754	382,349
Accommodation	1,752,393	
Other Travel Expenses	369,574	
Total Travel Expenditure	13,337,926	

Table includes Therapeutic Goods Administration, Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, Office of the Aged Care Commissioner and National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment.

c) Yes, staff within the Department adhere to the Government's Lowest Practical Fare and International Best Fare of the Day policies when booking flights. The Department receives a quarterly report from its Travel Management Company, outlining its performance against these policies.

1 Minister for Health & Ageing: Prior to Ministerial reshuffle on 14 December 2011.

2 Minister for Health: Following Ministerial reshuffle on 14 December 2011.

- d) Lounge memberships are provided to Senior Executive Service staff and frequent travellers. SES staff are entitled to receive lounge membership, as part of their remuneration package. Frequent travellers may apply to Branch Heads for lounge memberships.

Classification	No.
EL1	61
EL2	137
LEGAL OFFICER	3
MEDICAL OFFICER	43
SES 1	68
SES 2	13
SES 3	12
SECRETARY	1
TOTAL	338

The total cost of airline lounge memberships paid by the Department during the period 1 July 2011 to 31 May 2012 was \$19,653.25.

- e) No, administrative support staff or Executive Assistants do not travel with SES staff.